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NOTE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 4055th meeting of the Security Council, held on 22 October 1999, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General concerning the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security of 21 September 1999 (A/54/378-S/1999/994).

"The Security Council reiterates its grave concern at the continued Afghan conflict, which is a serious and growing threat to regional and international peace and security. It strongly condemns the Taliban for the launching in July 1999, only one week after the meeting of the 'Six plus Two' group in Tashkent, of a new offensive, despite the repeated demands by the Council to cease fighting. This has undermined international efforts to facilitate the restoration of peace in Afghanistan. The fighting following the offensive has resulted in enormous suffering to the civilian population of Afghanistan. The Taliban has a primary responsibility for this.

"The Security Council reiterates that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan and that only a negotiated political settlement aimed at the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative government acceptable to all Afghans can lead to peace and reconciliation. It recalls its demand that the parties to the conflict, especially the Taliban, resume negotiations under United Nations auspices without delay and preconditions in full compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council. The Council notes that the United Front of Afghanistan have repeatedly made clear that they are willing to talk with the Taliban in order to reach a solution to the country's problems.

"The Security Council reiterates that outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, including the involvement of foreign combatants and military personnel and the supply of weapons and other materials used in the conflict, should cease immediately. It calls upon all States to take resolute measures to prohibit their military personnel

from planning and participating in combat operations in Afghanistan, and immediately to withdraw their personnel and to assure that the supply of ammunition and other war-making materials is halted. The Council expresses its deep distress over reports indicating the involvement in the fighting in Afghanistan, on the side of the Taliban forces, of thousands of non-Afghans nationals, mostly from religious schools and some of whom are below the age of 14.

"The Security Council reaffirms its full support for the efforts of the United Nations, in particular the activities of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) and those of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, in facilitating the political process towards the goals of national reconciliation and a lasting political settlement with the participation of all parties to the conflict and all segments of Afghan society, and reiterates its position that the United Nations must continue to play its central and impartial role in international efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict.

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the seriously deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. It calls upon all Afghan parties, and in particular the Taliban, to take the necessary steps to secure the uninterrupted supply of humanitarian aid to all in need of it and in this connection not to create impediments to the activities of the United Nations humanitarian agencies and international humanitarian organizations.

"The Security Council once again urges all Afghan factions to cooperate fully with UNSMA and international humanitarian organizations, and calls upon them, in particular the Taliban, to take the necessary steps to ensure the safety and freedom of movement of such personnel.

"The Security Council welcomes the Declaration on Fundamental Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict in Afghanistan (A/54/174-S/1999/812, annex) adopted by the 'Six plus Two' group on 19 July 1999 in Tashkent, particularly the agreement of members of the group not to provide military support to any Afghan party and to prevent the use of their territories for such purposes. It urges the members of the group and the Afghan factions to implement these principles in support of the efforts of the United Nations towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the continuing use of Afghan territory, especially areas controlled by the Taliban, for the sheltering and training of terrorists and planning of terrorist acts, and reaffirms its conviction that the suppression of international terrorism is essential for the maintenance of international peace and security. It insists that the Taliban cease the provision of sanctuary and training for international terrorists and their organizations, take effective measures to ensure that the territory under its control is not used for terrorist installations and camps or for the preparation or organization of terrorist acts against other States or their citizens, and cooperate with efforts to bring indicted terrorists to justice. The Council demands once again that the Taliban turn over indicted terrorist Usama bin Laden to appropriate

authorities as set out in its resolution 1267 (1999) of 15 October 1999. It reaffirms its decision to implement on 14 November 1999 the measures contained in that resolution, unless the Secretary-General reports that the Taliban has fully complied with the obligation set out in paragraph 2 of that resolution.

"The Security Council is deeply disturbed also by a significant increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan, especially in areas controlled by the Taliban, which will contribute to the war-making capabilities of the Afghans and will have even more serious international consequences. It demands that the Taliban, as well as others, halt all illegal drug activities. The Council calls upon Member States, in particular those neighbouring Afghanistan, and all others concerned to undertake concerted measures to stop the trafficking of illegal drugs from Afghanistan.

"The Security Council deplores the worsening human rights situation in Afghanistan. It expresses particular alarm at the continuing disregard by the Taliban of the concerns expressed by the international community. The Council underlines the unacceptability of the forced displacement of the civilian population, in particular that conducted by the Taliban during their recent offensive, summary executions, the deliberate abuse and arbitrary detentions of civilians, violence and continuing discrimination against women and girls, the separation of men from their families, the use of child soldiers, the widespread burning of crops and destruction of homes, the indiscriminate bombing and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Afghanistan. It calls upon all Afghan parties, especially the Taliban, to put an end to such practices, to adhere to the international norms and standards in this sphere, to take urgent measures to improve the human rights situation and, as an immediate first step, to ensure the protection of civilians.

"The Security Council reiterates that the capture by the Taliban of the Consulate-General of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the murder of the Iranian diplomats and a journalist in Mazar-e-Sharif constitute flagrant violations of international law. It demands that the Taliban cooperate fully with the United Nations in investigating these crimes with a view to prosecuting those responsible.

"The Security Council looks forward to the Secretary-General's next report on the situation in Afghanistan, and encourages him to review options for the Security Council and the General Assembly.

"The Security Council deplores the failure of the leadership of the Taliban to take measures to comply with the demands made in its previous resolutions, especially to conclude a ceasefire and to resume negotiations, and in this context reaffirms its readiness to consider the imposition of measures, in accordance with its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations, with the aim of achieving the full implementation of its relevant resolutions."